

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 698

By Shepard

A RESOLUTION to recognize and congratulate Head Coaches Ralph and Karen Weekly and the University of Tennessee softball team.

WHEREAS, the General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those successful athletic teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this State; and

WHEREAS, lead by Head Coaches Ralph and Karen Weekly, the University of Tennessee Lady Vols softball team has achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2007 season as they claimed yet another Southeastern Conference regular season title and advanced through the NCAA tournament to the Women's College World Series, ending their season with an impressive 63-8 record as the national runner-up; and

WHEREAS, the Lady Vols began their amazing journey to Oklahoma City by hosting the NCAA Regionals in Knoxville, where they soundly defeated Furman (8-0), North Carolina (2-0), and Winthrop (7-0) to advance to the Super Regionals; and

WHEREAS, facing an upstart team from the University of Hawaii, the Lady Vols showed their experience and resolve as claimed victory, two games to one, and punched their ticket to the Women's College World Series; and

WHEREAS, a team on a mission, Tennessee garnered shutout victories over Texas A&M (2-0), Arizona (1-0), and Northwestern (7-0) to advance to the finals, where they awaited their opponents, top-seeded Arizona; and

WHEREAS, though they took the first game in the three game series, the Lady Vols lost a heartbreaker in the second game, losing in ten innings by the score of 0-1; though losing the deciding final game 0-5, the Lady Vols remain champions in the eyes of this state; and

WHEREAS, three Lady Vols players were named to the NCAA All-Tournament team, pitcher Monica Abbott, outfielder India Chiles, and centerfielder Lindsay Schutzler; and

WHEREAS, Lady Vols pitching ace Monica Abbott finished her senior season with a 50-5 record; she was selected USA Softball's National Collegiate Player of the Year, after setting the NCAA Division I records for wins (189), appearances (253), strikeouts (2,440), shutouts (112), innings pitched (1,448), and strikeouts in a single season (724), as she completed her remarkable career at the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, successful seasons like this are achieved only through hard work, dedication, and the ability to work together as a team and excel together with a cooperative spirit; the Lady Vols exhibited each of these rare qualities during their regular season and the NCAA tournament; and

WHEREAS, the softball players at the University of Tennessee epitomize all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved the highest level of success on the diamond while showing the highest degree of character both on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Lady Vols softball team are: Nicole Kajitani, Liane Horiuchi, Tiffany Baker, Alexia Clay, Danielle Pieroni, Natalee Weissinger, Monica Abbott, Kenora Posey, Caitlin Ryan, Megan Rhodes, Shannon Doepping, Allison Fulmer, Erinn Webb, Lillian Hammond, Anita Manuma, India Chiles, Jennifer Griffin, Lindsay Schutzler, Tonya Callahan, and Tiffany Huff; and

WHEREAS, this outstanding team enjoys the services of Head Coaches Ralph and Karen Weekly and greatly benefits from their years of knowledge, game experience, and passion for the sport of softball they share along with their staff, Assistant Coach Marty McDaniel, Volunteer Coach Stephanie Humphrey-Sayne, Director of Softball Operations Kendall Rainey, Administrative Assistant Ashlie Goble, and Manager Audrea Hendricks; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young women not only made possible a memorable softball season, but also surely bode well for their success in every future endeavor; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the Tennessee Lady Vols softball team upon their many accomplishments during the 2007 season and for serving as examples of the high quality of the youth of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Head Coaches Ralph and Karen Weekly and the University of Tennessee Lady Vols softball team upon an outstanding season even as we applaud their tremendous performance in the NCAA tournament and wish them every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.